

*Witt has handled 350 disasters; seasoned leader who can get the power back on*

Hauppauge, NY— Today, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) announced that he spoke with James Lee Witt, Former director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and called for him to be brought in to manage LIPA and restore power to the more than 150,000 LIPA customers who still lack power 12 days after Hurricane Sandy hit Long Island.

Rep. Israel said, “James Lee Witt came in and fixed the federal response to both Katrina and Rita when no one else could. He’s been to my district at an Emergency Preparedness forum that I organized. He’s considered no nonsense and a no-red-tape problem solver. He is someone who actually knows how to get the lights on and the fuel flowing. This morning, I asked him if he could come to New York, go into LIPA, and get results. And I’ve asked the governor to bring him in immediately.”

LIPA has flailed in trying to restore power after the storm. Officials at all levels have criticized the leadership of LIPA as being rudderless. Witt was FEMA director under President Bill Clinton from 1993-2001 and was called upon to oversee reconstruction in Louisiana after initial Hurricane Katrina response efforts came up short.

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